



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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MAR 29 1994
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March 24, 1994

For Immediate Release:

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news digest

94057D

Bishops continue to hammer out a collegial spirit--and a word on racism and sexuality

Although the journey toward a collegial style of leadership may contain more bumps along the road, bishops of the Episcopal Church are convinced that they are closer to that collegiality, according to several bishops following their March 9-13 meeting at the Kanuga Conference Center in North Carolina.

During their meeting, bishops continued to address some thorny and potentially explosive issues that will come before the church's 71st General Convention in Indianapolis this fall, including concerns about finances and restructure, racism and sexuality. Much of the time was spent hammering out language for a pastoral teaching on sexuality mandated by the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix. Bishops reviewed the third draft of the closely guarded document, in expectation that the final text will be ready to release in Indianapolis.

In a conversation following the meeting Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning acknowledged that some bishops are still not content with the current draft of the teaching, but expressed hope that "a substantial majority" will support the final version. "We are trying to assure that every voice is heard and that no one is set aside," he said.

According to Bishop Richard Grein of New York, chair of the committee that is developing the teaching, commentaries from ethicists and biblical theologians will be incorporated in the current draft as well as suggestions made in Kanuga. A fourth draft will be mailed to bishops in late April, and after they have had a chance to respond, a fifth and final draft will be presented to the opening session of the House of Bishops at the General Convention and then to the opening joint session of both houses. (Page 6)

94058D

In historic service, Church of England ordains 32 women to the priesthood

In a dramatic and historic service described as "a new beginning" for the Church of England, 32 women were ordained to the priesthood on March 12 in the 13th-century cathedral in Bristol. The service was the final event in a decades-long movement for the ordination of women, a struggle some observers have said was the most important step for the Church of England since the 16th-century Reformation.

Describing the event as "the culmination of almost 20 years of formal debate and many more years of prayer and reflection," the archbishops of Canterbury and York, Dr. George Carey and Dr. John Habgood, said that the ordination marked "a new beginning" in the life of the church. Carey and Habgood urged both supporters and opponents of the ordination of women to the priesthood to show "generosity, tolerance, courtesy and loving patience with each other."

Anglican Communion officials estimate that there are more than 2,000 women ordained as priests worldwide within 14 of 31 autonomous provinces of the communion. Nearly 1,000 women deacons are expected to be ordained as priests in the Church of England this year. (Page 9)

94059D

Peterson appointed secretary general of the Anglican Communion

Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey has announced that the Very Rev. John L. Peterson, dean of St. George's College and canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, has been appointed the next secretary general of the Anglican Communion.

Carey's announcement followed a week-long meeting of the standing committees of the ACC and the primates of the Anglican Communion. During the meeting Peterson received the unanimous recommendation of an international search committee for the position as well as unanimous support by both standing committees.

"John Peterson has a wide understanding of Anglican Communion that will greatly support his work as general secretary," said Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning following the announcement. "John has a gift of

enthusiasm in his work that will bring a breath of fresh air to the work of the communion." (Page 12)

94060D

Rector of Quincy parish renounces Episcopal Church as fight for property continues

In a continuing struggle over the future of historic St. John's Episcopal Church in Quincy, Illinois, two denominations may face each other in court, now that the former rector and vestry of the parish have chosen to affiliate with the Anglican Church of America (ACA), a small denomination that broke away from the Episcopal Church in the late 1970s.

Gary Blade, senior warden of a group of former Episcopalians--now known as St. John's Anglican Church--wrote to parishioners informing them that the vestry had voted 8 to 0 to affiliate with the ACA. The Rev. Garrett Clanton, former rector of the parish, publicly renounced his affiliation with the Episcopal Church during a news conference on March 17 and was received into the ACA on March 19.

On March 11, parishioners who wish to remain in the Episcopal Church lost a request for a temporary injunction that would have guaranteed them access to the church building and frozen all assets until the dispute with dissidents was settled. Diocesan officials reported that the diocese has joined parishioners who remain Episcopalians in a lawsuit to regain control of the church building and assets. (Page 13)

94061D

Massachusetts elects bishop coadjutor on the first ballot

In a surprise first-ballot victory on March 12, the Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, former superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), became the future 15th bishop of Massachusetts. At the announcement of the vote less than 30 minutes after balloting began, 800 delegates gasped in unison and then jumped to their feet with jubilant applause. Many had expected balloting to go six or more rounds.

The popular 48-year-old retreat leader and spiritual director, well-known in many of the diocese's 190 congregations, was not present in Boston's St. Paul's Cathedral. Chosen last year to be chaplain to the House of

Bishops, he was with them at their meeting in North Carolina.

A native of Battle Creek, Michigan, Shaw entered the Society of St. John the Evangelist, also known as the Cowley Fathers, in 1975. He was elected superior in 1983. During his 10-year term he founded Cowley Publications, established the Cowley retreat center, Emory House, and developed Camp St. Augustine, a year-round program for inner-city boys and their families. Shaw will serve as bishop coadjutor with Bishop David Johnson after his consecration later this year. (Page 14)

94062D

Religious press helps defeat postal threat to third class mailers

Episcopal Communicators and the Associated Church Press (ACP) helped to successfully oppose an attempt by the U.S. Postal Service to restrict advertising eligibility for non-profit postal rates.

Admitting they were "overwhelmed" with 560 written protests, Postal Service officials have decided to back away from imposing proposed strict eligibility standards which would have eliminated advertising or forced Third Class non-profit publications to pay full rates--roughly doubling mailing costs.

However, despite the good news for many editors in the religious press, on March 9, 1994, the Postal Service presented a proposal to raise postal rates by an average of 10.3 percent, effective next year. The proposed increases are not uniform across all classes of mail. Third class non-profit mailers would appear to be the big winners, with increases of less than 2 percent. Second class non-profit mailers, however, face big increases ranging from 17-19 percent. These early 1995 increases for both classes would be in addition to the 2-4 percent increases already scheduled for October 1994.

(Page 15)

94063D

Episcopalians join NCC Bible literacy consultation

"The Bible provides us with the story of our faith, the foundations, the ancient memory of our faith," said Dr. Renita J. Weems, assistant professor of Old Testament at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville and the keynote speaker at the National Council of Churches (NCC) consultation to promote

biblical literacy in Nashville, March 11-13. A group of seven Episcopalians were among the 130 participants from 17 denominations who, in the words of the consultation organizers, sought to "encourage people to read the Scriptures with deeper understanding and to live out that word in their lives."

The Episcopalians who attended "were delighted to realize how many valuable resources are already available within the Episcopal Church," reported Harry Griffith, president of the Bible Reading Fellowship. "But they also found several of the resources exhibited by other denominations to have potential. The Episcopalians committed themselves to be a nucleus around which a major effort to promote the study of Scripture within the church could be formed."

The consultation was the beginning of a long-term "biblical literacy project" under the auspices of the NCC Bible Translation and Utilization department. (Page 17)

94064D

Episcopalians urged to support lobbying efforts on behalf of the poor and hungry

Episcopalians could make a major difference on behalf of the poor and hungry, according to hunger advocates involved in a new lobbying effort. "Without writing checks--just letters to Congress--Episcopalians can help win nearly a billion dollars for vital nutrition and health-related services for low-income children and women," said David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World (BFW), a 20-year-old anti-hunger advocacy group.

BFW recently launched the *A Child Is Waiting* letter-writing campaign which seeks to guarantee full funding for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to reach the nearly 3.5 million eligible women and children not currently served.

Dr. Betty Coats at the Washington Office of the Episcopal Church has given strong support for WIC. She pointed out that in February 1993 the Episcopal Church's Executive Council adopted a resolution that supported funding for the WIC program. "We feel WIC is a program that we would like to see more of our churches involved in," Coats said. (Page 18)

94057

Bishops continue to hammer out a collegial spirit--and a word on racism and sexuality

by Jeffrey Penn

Although the journey toward a collegial style of leadership may contain more bumps along the road, bishops of the Episcopal Church are convinced that they are closer to that collegiality, according to several bishops following their March 9-13 meeting at the Kanuga Conference Center in North Carolina.

"We haven't completed our work by any stretch of the imagination," said Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning in an interview. "But I think we have a sense of trust and accomplishment in terms of dealing with issues in a more substantial way than we've had in a very long time."

For the fifth time since the 1991 General Convention, bishops met together as a house, abandoning a legislative format for their interim meetings in favor of a collaborative style in small groups, "all done in the context of prayer and Bible study," Browning reported.

Pastoral on sexuality

Yet, despite the more congenial spirit among the bishops, they continued to address some thorny and potentially explosive issues that will come before the church's 71st General Convention in Indianapolis this fall, including concerns about finances and restructure, racism and sexuality.

Much of the time in Kanuga was spent hammering out language for a pastoral teaching on sexuality mandated by the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix. Bishops reviewed the third draft of the closely guarded document, in expectation that the final text will be ready to release in Indianapolis.

Browning acknowledged that some bishops are still not content with the current draft of the teaching, but expressed hope that "a substantial majority" will support the final version. "We are trying to assure that every voice is heard and that no one is set aside," he said.

According to Bishop Richard Grein of New York, chair of the committee that is developing the teaching, commentaries from ethicists and biblical theologians will be incorporated in the current draft as well as suggestions made in Kanuga. A fourth draft will be mailed to bishops in late April, and after they have had a chance to respond, a fifth and final draft will be presented to the opening session of the House of Bishops at the General

Convention and then to the opening joint session of both houses.

Grein emphasized that whatever text the bishops finally agree to release, the authority of the teaching "will not be by way of a resolution or definition," but rather as a continuing resource for the church's discussion on the issue. "There is no way to resolve this short of some in-breaking of the kingdom right now," he said.

"I think that our teaching will be more like a theological reflection than a doctrine on sexuality," said Bishop Craig Anderson, dean of the General Theological Seminary in New York, who has helped the bishops develop a more theological approach to the issue. "The house is taking theology very seriously and I think what we've done and how we've done it is significant," he added. "If we can do this with such sensitivity around something as controversial as sexuality, then there's nothing we can't do." While the new sense of community in the house is still "fragile," he is convinced that "the trust is deepening."

"It is a struggle--but it will pay off in the long run," added Bishop Sam Hulse of Northwest Texas.

"There was considerable candor, openness and confrontation in our small groups," Anderson added with a wry smile.

More balance needed

In a telephone conversation, Bishop Tom Ray of Northern Michigan said that he thought the statement was "moving in a direction" that could be described as a consensus of the house. "There are some who don't want any accommodation with the gay and lesbian lifestyle," Ray said. "They wanted more balance in terms of scriptural witness and the reference to ethicists who would present alternate viewpoints."

Bishop John MacNaughton of West Texas was one bishop who pressed for more balance in the document. "It still leaves out too many points of view," he said in an interview. Although he said that he was pleased with many parts of the draft, he said he still detected "some predisposed direction" in it.

Ray said that "emotions are high on this subject, and understandably so." Yet, he contended that the strength of the draft was that "it discusses the issues that are part of the reality of our society. In a sense the House of Bishops' pastoral teaching will give permission for Episcopalians to continue discussing those issues openly and honestly."

Ray reported some bishops expressed a fear that successful legislative resolutions on sexuality--from any side of the issue--might "drive them out of the church," and that there was a strong sentiment for a kind of patience and

tolerance "as we continue to live with one another in the midst of the ambiguity and ambivalence."

Continuing dialogue

Bishop George Hunt of Rhode Island said that he hoped the pastoral "can be received as part of the continuing dialogue." He also agreed with the sentiment expressed by Ray that "any specific resolutions from either house that seek to push the church toward one of the poles will probably be rejected" in Indianapolis.

Hunt warned that if the General Convention were to pass any resolutions at this time "it might be divisive to the point of a split in the church. Even though I might personally favor some particular resolution, I think the church would be better served to continue in the dialogue," Hunt said. "I think we are in the midst of some good discussion on this subject and we need to keep going until God's will becomes more clear."

Although several bishops said that it might be "appealing" if the General Convention chose not to consider any specific resolutions on sexuality, none of them were willing to endorse the idea at this point. Nevertheless, Grein suggested that all proposed resolutions might "be tested against the work of the bishops' pastoral teaching."

A whole new climate

No matter what language the bishops eventually adopt in a pastoral teaching on sexuality, racism or anything else, many said that their work together during the past triennium had produced a "whole new climate" to deal with each other as colleagues and with controversial issues.

"The circumstances are pressing us and we cannot do business as usual any longer," said Bishop Herbert Donovan, vicar of Trinity Church in New York and secretary of the House of Bishops. "In all of our efforts we are speaking of a commitment to continue the dialogue."

"We are more candid and honest with each other than in the past," Browning observed, but quickly added that "there may still be some bumps in the road."

In addition, the bishops

- refined a pastoral statement on racism that will be released shortly;
- agreed to continue the non-legislative format at meetings in the future;
- received a report from bishops on the Executive Council on proposals for a new formula of apportionment for national church revenue and

the reorganization and restructure of national staff; and

■ celebrated the election of the Rev. Thomas Shaw, chaplain to the House of Bishops for the past year, as bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

94058

In historic service, Church of England ordains 32 women to the priesthood

In a dramatic and historic service described as "a new beginning" for the Church of England, 32 women were ordained to the priesthood on March 12 in the 13th-century cathedral in Bristol.

The service was the final event in a decades-long movement for the ordination of women, a struggle some observers have said was the most important step for the Church of England since the 16th-century Reformation. The women took their places in history and received the laying on of hands, an ancient Christian gesture symbolizing the ordination of priests.

The stately and formal ordination rite proceeded without any interruptions or objections. For much of the service, television cameras and vergers with walkie talkies were the only hint of the historic significance of the event.

"Is it your will that they should be ordained priests?" Bishop Barry Rogerson of Bristol asked the estimated 1,200 members of the congregation. "It is!" was the thunderous and emphatic response that rang throughout the cathedral.

'Heaven and Earth are a bit closer'

A male deacon read the Gospel account of the encounter and charge to Mary Magdalene in the garden on Easter morning. In the sermon, Rogerson spoke of the long and patient pilgrimage of the women being ordained. "The journey of these women has not been a journey of the mind or the head, but is seen by those they have touched and who know that the Spirit of God is at work in them," Rogerson said.

Rogerson also spoke of the transformation in the life of the Apostle Paul from his male-dominated heritage to the revelation that all were equal in

Christ. He called for an end to discriminatory practices in the selection of people for the ministry.

The Rev. Angela Berners-Wilson, the senior Anglican chaplain at the University of Bristol, was the first to receive the laying on of hands. The women ranged in age from 30 to nearly 70.

As the sign of their new order the women adjusted their stoles from the "deacon" position to that of a priest and received a Bible. At the passing of the peace, the newly ordained women, some clearly on the verge of tears, mingled with male clergy and members of the congregation.

"I just think heaven and Earth moved a bit closer today," said the Rev. Jane Hayward, one of the women ordained, following the service. Hayward will serve as vicar of St. Mary Redcliffe in Bristol. Another new priest, the Rev. Susan Shipp of East Bristol described her ordination as "being liberated into the ministry."

One of the official representatives of the Episcopal Church to the event, Sally Bucklee, said that she was "overwhelmed by the sweep of history" represented by the occasion. Bucklee, who is president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, an organization of Episcopalians that supports equality for women in the church, said that she felt "a tremendous sense of fullness and completion" when the women received the laying on of hands.

Just before Rogerson gave the blessing, the Rev. Mark Cornelis, a Roman Catholic priest from Belgium, spoke to the congregation, asking them to "pray that the Roman Catholic church may finally be able to overcome ossified and discriminating legislation and allow women to be ordained and lead the way in preaching God's work, in celebrating Eucharist, and in showing ways for the community of faith to go."

A new beginning

Describing the event as "the culmination of almost 20 years of formal debate and many more years of prayer and reflection," the archbishops of Canterbury and York, Dr. George Carey and Dr. John Habgood, said that the ordination marked "a new beginning" in the life of the church.

Carey and Habgood urged both supporters and opponents of the ordination of women to the priesthood to show "generosity, tolerance, courtesy and loving patience with each other."

However, tolerance and courtesy were the victims of high emotions on both sides of the issue outside the cathedral. There were banners supporting the women's ordination, including ones that read, "RC women next," and "A Woman's Place is in the House of Bishops." A priest who opposed the ordinations purchased an advertisement on a local billboard reading, "The

Church of England murdered today." A priest in Lincoln was reported to compare female priests to witches and dogs. And another told television reporters on CNN that the ordinations in Bristol had created "an order of transvestite priests--women dressing up as priests."

Yet, Church of England officials contended that opposition is not as widespread as has been reported. Although as many as 700 clergy--some of them retired--have threatened to become Roman Catholics, so far fewer than 50 have formally resigned. Another 100 have indicated that they may leave the Church of England by next January. The Church of England has more than 10,000 priests.

Vatican describes ordinations as 'profound obstacle'

In a statement released from the Vatican just hours before the ordinations in Bristol, Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls reiterated that Pope John Paul II "had clearly and publicly affirmed that the ordination of women also constitutes a profound obstacle to every hope of reunion between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. This reunion is and remains a great hope, which this new obstacle makes more difficult," Navarro-Valls said.

However, an Anglican bishop who co-chaired Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue (ARCIC) was less pessimistic. "I believe the obstacles can and must be overcome," said Bishop Mark Santer. "I am confident that there will be a way round it."

Ordinations end two decades of debate

Although the Church of England's General Synod determined in 1975 that there was no theological obstacle to ordaining women, the issue has been the subject of contentious debate for nearly two decades. On November 11, 1992, the synod voted by the required two-thirds majority to approve legislation permitting the ordination of women as priests.

Anglican Communion officials estimate that there are more than 2,000 women ordained as priests worldwide within 14 of 31 autonomous provinces of the communion. Nearly 1,000 women deacons are expected to be ordained as priests in the Church of England this year.

--James Rosenthal, director of the Anglican Communion News Service in London, contributed to this report.

94059

Peterson appointed secretary general of the Anglican Communion

Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey has announced that the Very Rev. John L. Peterson, dean of St. George's College and canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, has been appointed the next secretary general of the Anglican Communion.

Peterson will have oversight of the Anglican Communion secretariat in London which includes support for the meetings of the Lambeth Conference, the Primates and the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC).

Carey's announcement followed a week-long meeting of the standing committees of the ACC and the primates of the Anglican Communion. During the meeting Peterson received the unanimous recommendation of an international search committee for the position as well as unanimous support by both standing committees.

"I consider the opportunity to forward the life of Christ within the community of provinces of the Anglican Communion a challenge, a privilege and a gift," Peterson said following the announcement.

A gifted administrator

"John Peterson has a wide understanding of Anglican Communion that will greatly support his work as general secretary," said Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning following the announcement. "John has a gift of enthusiasm in his work that will bring a breath of fresh air to the work of the communion."

Describing Peterson as "a gifted administrator with remarkable public relations skill," President Bishop Samir Kafity, primate of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, said that Peterson had "internationalized St. George's College" during his tenure there.

For the past 12 years Peterson has led successful programs to enlarge facilities at St. George's College and increase the student population in size and diversity. The college serves as a major resource center for the Anglican Communion, providing not only educational programs and hospitality to thousands of international visitors to the Holy Land, but also a strong commitment to the ecumenical movement.

Peterson holds several advanced degrees, including a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from Harvard University and a doctorate in Old Testament Theology from the Chicago Institute of Advanced Theology. He is canonically

resident in the Diocese of Western Michigan where he is also an honorary canon of the Cathedral of Christ the King in Kalamazoo. Peterson and his wife, Kirsten, are the parents of two adopted Palestinian children.

Peterson will succeed the Rev. Canon Samuel Van Culin who will retire in December 1994 after 12 years in office.

--based on a report by James Rosenthal, director of the Anglican Communion News Service in London.

[Editors note: a photo of John Peterson is available from ENS.]

94060

Rector of Quincy parish renounces Episcopal Church as fight for property continues

by Jeffrey Penn

In a continuing struggle over the future of historic St. John's Episcopal Church in Quincy, Illinois, two denominations may face each other in court, now that the former rector and vestry of the parish have chosen to affiliate with the Anglican Church of America (ACA), a small denomination that broke away from the Episcopal Church in the late 1970s.

Gary Blade, senior warden of a group of former Episcopalians--now known as St. John's Anglican Church--wrote to parishioners informing them that the vestry had voted 8 to 0 to affiliate with the ACA. The Rev. Garrett Clanton, former rector of the parish, publicly renounced his affiliation with the Episcopal Church during a news conference on March 17 and was received into the ACA on March 19.

Blade said that Clanton would soon return from a sabbatical in his capacity as rector--although as a priest in good standing with the ACA. According to Blade, Clanton will leave his post as rector of St. John's Anglican Church effective August 15, 1994, and the vestry has appointed a search committee to elect a new ACA rector to succeed Clanton.

Dissidents win initial court battle

The recent developments are the latest in a long string of disputes that have divided the 235-member parish (See story in March 10 ENS). On March 11, parishioners who wish to remain in the Episcopal Church lost a request for a temporary injunction that would have guaranteed them access to the church building and frozen all assets until the dispute with dissidents was settled.

Nevertheless, diocesan officials were undaunted in their determination to uphold the clear ownership of the building and the estimated \$2 million endowment. "The denial of the preliminary injunction is only a minor setback," said the Rev. Canon J.C. Emerson, diocesan communication officer, in a March 15 press release following the judgment of the court.

Emerson said that the diocese has joined parishioners who remain Episcopalians in a lawsuit to "make the parish's case and end the illegal occupation of the property of the legitimate St. John's Episcopal Church by a renegade and dissident few."

Until the property dispute is settled, members of St. John's Episcopal Church are meeting in a space nearby.

94061

Massachusetts elects bishop coadjutor on the first ballot

by Nan Cobbey

On the feast of Gregory the Great, a monastic who was elected pope, the Diocese of Massachusetts elected a monk to be the next bishop of the Episcopal Church's largest diocese.

In a surprise first-ballot victory on March 12, the Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, former superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), became the future 15th bishop of Massachusetts. At the announcement of the vote less than 30 minutes after balloting began, 800 delegates gasped in unison and then jumped to their feet with jubilant applause. Many had expected balloting to go six or more rounds.

The popular 48-year-old retreat leader and spiritual director, well-known in many of the diocese's 190 congregations, was not present in

Boston's St. Paul's Cathedral. Chosen last year to be chaplain to the House of Bishops, he was with them at their meeting in North Carolina.

When the bishops learned the news they rose in unison to applaud Shaw for a full five minutes. Then, as Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning quieted them to hear the remainder of his announcement,—that Shaw had been elected on a remarkable first ballot—they rose to their feet a second time and sustained their applause for another 5 minutes.

"The bishops' reaction to me was just incredibly humbling and comforting," Shaw said later, confiding that he was "amazed" at his election on a first ballot and grateful for the delegates' confidence.

A native of Battle Creek, Michigan, Shaw entered the Society of St. John the Evangelist, also known as the Cowley Fathers, in 1975. He was elected superior in 1983. During his 10-year term he founded Cowley Publications, established the Cowley retreat center, Emory House, and developed Camp St. Augustine, a year-round program for inner-city boys and their families.

Shaw will serve as bishop coadjutor with Bishop David Johnson after his consecration later this year.

—Nan Cobbey is features editor for *Episcopal Life*.

94062

Religious press helps defeat postal threat to third class mailers

Episcopal Communicators and the Associated Church Press (ACP) helped to successfully oppose an attempt by the U.S. Postal Service to restrict advertising eligibility for non-profit postal rates.

Admitting they were "overwhelmed" with 560 written protests, Postal Service officials have decided to back away from imposing proposed strict eligibility standards which would have eliminated advertising or forced third class non-profit publications to pay full rates—roughly doubling mailing costs.

The proposed ruling would have prevented advertising in third class non-profit publications, except "house ads" which could be defended as being essential to the purpose of the organization. Any "outside" advertising—even

for church-sponsored causes and events--would have subjected those publications to commercial postage rates.

While the outcome of the advertising restriction was successful, postal observers warned that higher costs resulting from a pending rate hike still could be devastating to some non-profit mailers in 1995.

Proposed rule protested

Representatives from Episcopal Communicators and the ACP protested a proposed change in rules which could limit paid advertising in third class non-profit mailers on January 28 in Washington. Mike Barwell of Southern Ohio, postal liaison for Episcopal Communicators, testified with ACP's John Stapert and Bob Terry and dozens of other mailers at the hearing.

Barwell spoke of the added financial burden that commercial postage rates would impose on non-profit mailers. Terry challenged the Postal Service's ability to determine which advertisements were substantially related to a publication's purpose. Stapert urged the Postal Service to use the already established "unrelated business income tax" standard to determine whether advertising in non-profit publications would be permitted. The oral comments bolstered written protests--many from Episcopal dioceses, bishops and communications officers--to encourage the Postal Service to withdraw the proposed regulation.

The Postal Service has announced it will use the Internal Revenue Service's "unrelated business income tax" criteria to determine whether an ad is or is not substantially related to the purpose of a publication. This means that an advertisement may be carried in a non-profit publication if it does not generate unrelated business income tax for the mailer.

A final report on advertising eligibility is expected in April, but implementation may be delayed beyond that, according to Stapert.

Barwell said he was very pleased with the immediate response from the Episcopal Communicators, bishops and congregations. "It shows that when we know the issues, are organized, and can be specific in our responses, we change the course of events which otherwise would be very damaging," Barwell said.

All rates likely to increase

On March 9, 1994, the Postal Service presented a proposal to raise postal rates by an average of 10.3 percent, effective next year.

The proposed increases are not uniform across all classes of mail. Third class non-profit mailers would appear to be the big winners, with increases of less than 2 percent. Second class non-profit mailers, however,

face big increases ranging from 17-19 percent. These early 1995 increases for both classes would be in addition to the 2-4 percent increases already scheduled for October 1994.

94063

Episcopalians join NCC Bible literacy consultation

by Jack Donovan

"The Bible provides us with the story of our faith, the foundations, the ancient memory of our faith," said Dr. Renita J. Weems, the keynote speaker at the National Council of Churches (NCC) consultation to promote biblical literacy in Nashville, March 11-13. A group of seven Episcopalians were among the 130 participants from 17 denominations who, in the words of the consultation organizers, sought to "encourage people to read the Scriptures with deeper understanding and to live out that word in their lives."

Weems, assistant professor of Old Testament at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville and an ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, reminded her audience that the Bible is a product of oral culture. She emphasized the importance of studying the Bible in community and of adapting Bible study to the demands of life in the 1990s, citing audiotapes and storytelling as possibilities.

The Episcopalians who attended "were delighted to realize how many valuable resources are already available within the Episcopal Church" reported Harry Griffith, president of the Bible Reading Fellowship. "But they also found several of the resources exhibited by other denominations to have potential. The Episcopalians committed themselves to be a nucleus around which a major effort to promote the study of Scripture within the church could be formed."

The consultation was the beginning of a long-term "biblical literacy project" under the auspices of the NCC Bible Translation and Utilization department (BTU). BTU Director Rev. Dr. Arthur Van Eck challenged the consultation participants with his description of "biblical illiteracy." "Pastors and other congregational leaders report that people no longer read the Bible

and very few attend adult study groups, and that people do not relate even the concerns of the church to Scripture," Van Eck said. "How can the church know its mission without being rooted in Scripture?"

Griffith concluded that although "having a truly biblically literate church might take 50 years of constant effort, all of the participants agreed that the time to start is now."

94064

Episcopalians urged to support lobbying efforts on behalf of the poor and hungry

by Jack Donovan

Episcopalians could make a major difference on behalf of the poor and hungry, according to hunger advocates involved in a new lobbying effort. "Without writing checks--just letters to Congress--Episcopalians can help win nearly a billion dollars for vital nutrition and health-related services for low-income children and women," said David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World (BFW), a 20-year-old anti-hunger advocacy group.

BFW recently launched the *A Child Is Waiting* letter-writing campaign which seeks to guarantee full funding for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to reach the nearly 3.5 million eligible women and children not currently served.

"Children comprise the largest segment of poor people in the United States" said David Fouse, BFW religious media associate. "Yet, due to a lack of funding, only 60 percent of eligible low-income children and women receive vital WIC benefits." A sluggish economy, rising unemployment and declining real wages have driven more people in the United States into poverty than at any time since 1962, Fouse contended, "and this has intensified the need for WIC."

Dr. Betty Coats at the Washington Office of the Episcopal Church has given strong support for WIC. She pointed out that in February 1993 the Episcopal Church's Executive Council adopted a resolution that supported funding for the WIC program. "We feel WIC is a program that we would like to see more of our churches involved in," Coats said.

"Good nutrition is provided to pregnant women and to the mother and child after birth. But WIC does it's own kind of advocacy too," Coats said. "It has a heavy education component that helps mothers learn what a balanced diet really is. The food is the enticement to come back, and when they do, they continue to receive the information."

[Editors note: For more information about the *A Child is Waiting* campaign, write to Bread for the World, 1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD 20910; call (301) 608-2400; or fax (301) 608-2401.]



news briefs

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Canadian parliament drops Christ from prayer

The name of Jesus Christ was dropped recently from the opening prayer of Canada's House of Commons by the unanimous consent of members of parliament. Three references to Christ were deleted, as were some references to the British Empire and the Royal Family. The new prayer approved by the parliament calls on the blessings of Almighty God and includes prayers for Queen Elizabeth II and Canada's governor-general.

Runcie calls for openness to women priests

During a sermon at the ordination of 10 women priests in Sheffield Cathedral on March 15, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Robert Runcie, urged traditionalists to be open to the possibility of change and praised the "tough gentleness" that women priests could bring the church. "We should not be shy about being a traditionalist. If you are secure in it you should be able to see that tradition is a living thing and therefore it changes. But as it changes, it remains the same thing," Runcie said. The ordination of 10 women in Sheffield were added to the first 32 women ordained in Bristol on March 12.

Raiser says ecumenism is in a period of transition

The ecumenical movement is undergoing a period of transition, according to Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC). "Old certainties are being called into question. It is not yet clear, for instance, what the implications of the end of the Cold War will be for the future of the ecumenical movement," Raiser told a recent gathering of British and Irish ecumenical leaders. "A new reality has arisen between the church which transcends their historically separate identities," Raiser said, adding that "the WCC has to acknowledge that the ecumenical scene has become multifaceted and more complex. Different actors pursue aims which are not always compatible."

Conservative Lutherans enter campaign for new leader

An independent, conservative Lutheran journal has begun to weigh in on the campaign for the person who will succeed Bishop Herbert Chilstrom, head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In a recent issue of the journal, *Form Letter*, several qualities for the next leader of the ELCA were listed, including that "he...must have his orthodox wits about him." The journal also contended that the new leader "must have a clear and proven ability to ride herd on an often unherdable bureaucracy. This ostensibly disqualifies most synodical bishops." Finally, the journal insisted that the next bishop must have a passion for Christian unity--particularly with regard to the traditionalist Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and Roman Catholics. "The next bishop must understand that conversation anywhere else but with Rome, however entertaining, is ultimately diverting from the goal of the Augsburg Confession and does nothing to heal the great breach in Western Christendom," the journal said. The ELCA will elect Chilstrom's successor at the churchwide assembly, August 16-22, 1995.

Canadian revenue decline continues

According to a recent report in the *Anglican Journal*, financial woes continue to plague the Anglican Church of Canada, which faces a deficit of more than \$1 million by the end of 1994 unless it cuts program spending. The crisis stems from lower than anticipated revenues from the Anglican Appeal and continued shortages in giving from dioceses. The church spent much of the first half of 1993 cutting spending for 1994 after its executive council ordered reductions last May.

Study predicts decline in Dutch church membership

Three-quarters of the people in the Netherlands will not be church members in the year 2020 according to a report released in February by the Social and Cultural Planning Office. The Protestant daily *Trouw* said that among the 15 countries surveyed for church membership only the former East Germany had lower figures for church membership than the Netherlands. Despite the declining figures for church affiliation, 75 percent of the Dutch people surveyed said they believed in God, and even outside the church many believed in life after death and accepted biblical accounts of miracles.

Vatican vacancy?

When Mervyn Stockwood was Anglican bishop of Southwark, he discussed prospects for unity with the Roman Catholic Church. "I could

accept the papacy," Stockwood said, referring to a perennially irreconcilable point in ecumenical discussions. And in response, the *Evening Standard* queried, "Ah, but has he been offered it?"

NCC seeks new means of support

Nation Council of Churches (NCC) General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell recently announced that the NCC is finding new ways to support its programs as financing from member churches declines. Campbell said the NCC would rely more on grants available from foundations and the government, and that this would require different, more flexible patterns of hiring and using staff. Due to continuing budget problems, the NCC has cut its executive level staff from 87 to 46 in the last decade. Campbell noted that denominations who have provided staff assistance to the NCC have their own deficits that are forcing them to new rounds of "restructuring and downsizing."

Raiser calls for end of violence in Holy Land

Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, recently called for an end to vengeance and hatred in the wake of the massacre of Muslim worshippers by a Jewish settler on February 25 in Hebron. Raiser also expressed concern over the bombing of a Maronite church at Junieh in Lebanon on February 27 which killed 10 people and injured another 60 as they were receiving communion at Sunday mass. "All those responsible must be identified and made accountable," Raiser said of the attacks. "Justice, however, requires more than this. It demands that the thirst for vengeance, the hatred, and the refusal to honor the sacred, God-given humanity of the other must be purged from the souls of these nations and peoples and of all of us who through complicity or silence have condoned the decades of injustice which have made of the Holy Land a killing field."

Polish newspaper criticizes Spielberg film

A leading Polish Roman Catholic newspaper recently criticized Stephen Spielberg's Holocaust film, *Schindler's List*, for falsifying the historical record of Polish-Jewish relations. The commentary criticized Spielberg for portraying Poles "through the prism of their hatred for Jews" as opposed to the "outstanding German" Schindler. "At the end of the movie, we are informed that only 4,000 Jews currently live in Poland and that in comparison the descendants of Jews saved by Schindler numbered 6,000. It suggests that this one good German rescued more Jews than all the Poles put together," the paper contended. The commentary also claimed that Jewish survivors had testified that Schindler accepted large payments in diamonds for rescuing Jews,

and had spoken out against his "exaggerated" modern portrayal as a "good Nazi."

Azerbaijan president underscores religious leadership

"The resolution of some political problems is beyond the reach of politicians," Azerbaijan president Aliiev recently told two international church representatives. "Do not underestimate the role of spiritual leaders, it is central." The representatives, the Rev. Dwain Epps of the World Council of Churches and Professor Dr. Hermann Goltz of the Conference of European Churches, visited the country at the invitation of Sheikh Ul-Islam Akkah Shukur Pashazade, head of the Azerbaijani Muslim Community. Epps said he was impressed that the president had underlined the need for religious leaders to help find a solution to the long-lasting war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. It highlighted the importance of last year's historic agreement reached between the Sheikh and His Holiness Catholicos Vasken I, head of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church.



news features

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Anglican indigenous network meets in New Zealand, dreams of higher visibility

by James Solheim

As they approached the gates of the ancestral *marae*, or traditional meeting house of New Zealand's indigenous Maori people in the city of Rotorua, delegations representing the Anglican Indigenous Network received a warm welcome—and took crucial steps on their journey towards visibility and self-determination.

American Indians and native Hawaiians, joined by indigenous cousins from Canada and, for the first time, aborigines from Australia were presented by the Maori hosts of Aotearoa/New Zealand for a traditional exchange of speeches and song to express a growing sense of community.

"We have come as students—to learn from the example you have set," said Bishop Steven Charleston of Alaska in one of the responses during the March 2 ceremony. "You are the first spark, the first light of rebirth of native peoples around the world. That which we thought was lost, or taken from us, is being rekindled. We see in what you have done a hope for the future of all of us."

The 36 participants had come for five intense days of discussion and strategy on how to intensify their efforts for self-determination in their respective Anglican churches. And they had come to study first-hand the unique relationship between the Maoris and the Anglican Church of New Zealand, a partnership hammered out in 1978 that gives the Maori full and equal stature and their own episcopal oversight. The move ended 160 years of misunderstanding and ensured the growth of the Maori church, establishing a model that is being carefully studied by indigenous peoples in the rest of the Anglican Communion.

While admiring the Maori model, participants held no illusions that it could be replicated elsewhere. The Maoris share a common language and culture and a small geographical area, unlike the hundreds of Indian cultures in North America. They also have a strong lay and ordained leadership—an issue that dominated several of the sessions—and they are growing. Yet all the participants shared a common dream that they could achieve higher visibility and more freedom to shape their own ministry, like the Maoris.

Lost traditions, lost stories

During the opening session at St. John's Seminary in Auckland, each delegation shared its struggles, talking openly and painfully of "lost traditions and lost stories," the continuing land struggles. Bishop Whakahuihui Vercoe, senior bishop of the Maori church, welcomed his guests by calling attention to the similarity of their problems but contended that "God created us as one so we should share who we are."

Bishop Sir Paul Reeves, a Maori who recently returned to the seminary after serving as Anglican Observer at the United Nations, urged a "realistic presentation of where you are." He said that he hoped the meeting could build binding, constructive relationships and some practical assessment of needs and resources, "how we can help each other." He added that the network had "reached the time in our history when we need to do something that can be measured."

The network was born when Reeves, joined by Vercoe and Archbishop Michael Peers of Canada, called together a small group of Native Americans at the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix to shape an Anglican response to the United Nations Year of the Indigenous People. The network was nourished by a series of visits between the Maori and American Indians, pointed out Owanah Anderson, staff officer for Indian Ministry in the Episcopal Church, who coordinated the exchanges. "The meeting in Phoenix broadened the cooperation and gave birth to the network," she said.

Charleston spoke for the delegation from the United States and observed that the 1992 celebration of 500 years of survival at Washington National Cathedral had been "a major effort to raise awareness." The service, which brought together indigenous people from throughout North America, emphasized that "we are not victims of history but survivors, celebrating our strength as a people."

Anderson said that recent budget cuts and restructure cast some doubts about the future but she quickly added that the election of the fifth American Indian bishop, Creighton Robertson in South Dakota, "represents a new opportunity, reinforcing an internal network we didn't have before."

A treaty to stand on

Shane Jones, a Maori activist who served in the office of New Zealand's prime minister, recounted how an important treaty has provided crucial leverage for recovery of Maori culture.

In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi defined the compact between indigenous Maori leadership and the settlers or colonizers, what Jones called the "foundation document for New Zealand society. All political institutions derive their legitimacy from the treaty."

The treaty's three simple articles, written in two languages, was "quickly forgotten" as New Zealand drew up a constitution that left the Maoris on the fringe. The treaty emerged in the 1960s as a rallying symbol for Maori rights and led in 1975 to the formation of a tribunal--the only bi-cultural court in the world--to investigate the persistent abuse of Maori culture and the rights as defined by the treaty.

"This society found its roots--whether it wanted to or not--in the treaty," Jones said in describing how it was used to recover parts of the Maori heritage. In addition to land rights, "Maori language has become an icon and symbol of cultural pride," he added.

After 150 years of marginalization and dislocation, progress comes very slowly, Jones emphasized. "We are moving through a period of decolonization, attempting to bring balance to our economic resources. In that struggle, the church has used its prophetic voice and "risked its popularity." While New Zealand is on the verge of major political and economic changes that represent fresh hope for the Maoris, Jones has doubts whether the Maoris are prepared for the transition. With such deep gaps in skills and education, it will very difficult for them to participate and help shape those changes.

Dreams of an Indian diocese

Ginny Doctor, a Mohawk from New York who is now a missionary in Alaska, said that the Episcopal Council on Indian Ministry has been discussing a "homeland diocese" based roughly on the Maori model. "We began to dream that we could be like the Maori," she told the group. "It would give us the power and choice to ordain the people we need."

The vision is not a new one, Doctor stressed. It is an idea discussed a generation ago but with increasing interest because of the special needs of native peoples. She said it was time to "jump off the cradle board" of dependence, referring to an Indian method of caring for babies.

"How can we set our own standards for ordination, our own structures?" Charleston asked in a sermon to the seminary community. "How do we, as indigenous people, not only survive in institutional structures, but

challenge and transform those structures in ways that will benefit our people?"

The Maori of Aotearoa have "led the way and inspired us," and "given us such a bright vision," Charleston said--encouraging us to "reach out our arms across the dotted lines of colonialism." He added, "We are no longer stepchildren to a colonial church but a free and indigenous people.... We are prepared to take over our own destiny."

Carol Hampton of Oklahoma, field officer in the Episcopal Church's Office for Indian Ministry, pointed out that leadership is one of the most pressing problems. The clearest evidence of the crisis is the fact that there are no native Episcopalians in seminary at this time. "We must push through the barriers and take over the ordination process for our own people," she said.

Aborigines struggle to reclaim their culture

In an open period of sharing, Bishop Arthur Malcolm of Australia said that he gets "really hurt inside" because, as an aborigine, he can't speak his own language or sing the old songs. Even though his people have been in Australia for about 40,000 years, the missionaries destroyed his culture and imposed European forms of culture and worship. Things began to change in 1985 when he was appointed the first aborigine bishop. "The church finally realized that only the aborigines could reach their own people," he told the hushed circle. "They still want to keep us on the end of a rope but we must be free so the spirit of God can flow through us." He expressed deep gratitude for the support of the network and what it represented to those like him who languish in isolation.

Ordained leadership is also a problem for native Hawaiians who have ordained only seven priests in their whole history, enduring a 26-year gap before the last ordination in 1991. In an effort to cultivate "culturally appropriate training," they are working with the diocese to develop an alternate process for ordination, to stand alongside the traditional process. "We must have native clergy--or others, like the Mormons, will take over," said the Rev. Darrow Aiona of Honolulu.

The Canadians are still struggling against deeply ingrained attitudes and the legacy of residential schools established in 1820 to strip them of their heritage. Participants sat in stunned silence as they viewed a videotape of the second native gathering that contained searing personal testimonies of the effects of assimilation. In one of the video's most touching moments, Archbishop Michael Peers, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, apologized for the church's complicity in the residential schools and for trying to make natives into "our image."

"Your story is our story," Bishop Vercoe said in an emotional summary

of the reports. "We are a people who know how to survive. We are custodians, links for our children of our language, customs and traditions. Let us dream on."

Sharing needs and resources

Sessions that attempted to sketch needs and resources in the network proved to be a mixture of powerful personal stories of pain and struggle with some hard-nosed strategies to continue the autonomy struggle that obviously cut across all boundaries of time and culture. Underlying the whole conference was a determination to fight systematic attempts to destroy native cultures around the world.

- The Australians said they were still in the early stages of building an identity on the national level and were grateful that they were now part of a network. "We need this network--we can't do it alone," Bishop Malcolm said.

- The Canadians said that they were feeling "loss and confusion of identity," that they needed to continue the healing process, involving the whole church. "Our people need to hear the story."

- The Hawaiians said they hoped to serve as a "bridge between native Americans and Polynesians," encouraging exchanges and gatherings to explore the common ground.

- The Maoris said that they "recognized each of our journeys as precious examples of God's creation" and they were concerned that other participants not duplicate the problems they experienced.

Nourishing the network

In the closing session, ideas came spilling out of the participants--a proposal to reach out and include Latin Americans in the network; persistent efforts to exchange people and ideas to nourish the network; a newsletter and video to interpret the network; coordination of internal communications to keep everyone linked.

At one point, Doctor pointed out that the network was experiencing "growing pains" as it struggled for self-definition. In an interview later with the U.S. delegation, Charleston said that earlier meetings were formative, working on the sense of identity, but this one was much more specific. "We are taking our first steps as a solid new network." He said that participants "found the common threads that unite us--and some ways we can move for better support."

Charleston said that it was clear to indigenous people that they shared one basic need. "We are largely invisible in our larger societies," he said. Referring to a presentation by a Maori communicator, he pointed out that the

Maori, who are about 12-15 percent of the population, receive almost no media coverage in the wider society.

"Indigenous churches around the world have come of age," Charleston argued. "The move toward culturally identifiable presence in the church will continue--the time is right." That move should not be seen by others as "separatist" but rather a "symbol of growth and strength within the Anglican Communion. The move into mission and growth are indications of health and vitality," he said.

Partnership between PB's Fund and medical supplier provides medicine to those in need

by Tracy Early

A partnership between the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and Interchurch Medical Assistance (IMA), an agency based in Maryland, enabled the PB's Fund to provide \$1.4 million worth of medicine and other medical supplies abroad in 1993 at the cost of only \$115,000.

IMA represents 14 church-related relief agencies in securing donations from pharmaceutical companies, and then arranges shipment to countries that the agencies designate.

With charges set according to the materials shipped, agencies pay from one to six percent of the value as a handling fee. For a recent shipment to Haiti, this meant paying \$9,782 for the cost of sending goods valued at \$251,651. For a shipment to Liberia, \$3,555 helped to support the sending of medicines worth \$51,094.

Stretching the available dollars

The PB's Fund allocates \$100,000 a year to respond to the many appeals for drugs and other materials needed in areas where they are not readily available or affordable. As requests come from hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities from throughout the Anglican Communion and other partners, IMA makes possible a response going far beyond what the financial resources of the PB's Fund would otherwise allow.

In some cases, donations that have been received by IMA do not

include specific items that are needed in a particular country. The PB's Fund may then authorize IMA to make purchases or turn over funds to whomever has made the request. Funds occasionally go to agencies such as the New Sudan Council of Churches, which received \$5,000 last year to cover costs of buying and shipping some medicines that were in especially critical demand.

IMA has been providing this service since 1960, when it was established in response to requests from pharmaceutical companies. It is a service to them as well as to the churches because companies interested in making donations can deal with one central and representative agency, rather than having to respond one-by-one to requests from hundreds of different hospitals and other mission groups.

Use of the agency also means that the churches get assistance in the handling of medical supplies by specialists who can inspect donations with expertise, classify them and see that they are stored and shipped properly.

The service of IMA is available not only to the 14 church-related bodies that make up its membership and have seats on its board, but also to other approved nonprofit agencies that can demonstrate a capability for getting donated supplies to people in need and are sponsored by member churches.

--Tracy Early is a freelance writer in New York.

Photos available in this issue of ENS:

1. Women priests in England take center stage (94058)
2. Browning congratulates Shaw on election (94061)
3. Lobbying effort will aid poor women and children (94064)
4. Anglican indigenous network visits Maori people in New Zealand (94066)
5. U.S. delegation meets with indigenous network in New Zealand (94066)

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are April 7 and April 21.